Maria Badillo

W 400 Rough draft

The most memorable writhing experience I have had in the short twenty-one years of my life happened my senior year of high school. Being an English education major I have has to write many papers throughout my college career, but none of them gave me the strength and courage like the one I’m about to tell you of.

It was second semester of my senior year and Mrs. Fiene assigned the dreaded notorious “senior portfolio”. I was excited to almost be done with high school, but nervous as well because with this project Mrs. Fiene could decide whether or not if I was going to graduate. (Along with that diploma I would receive.) Most seniors were nervous about this assignment as well as our Econ class’s “stock market project”, both of which consumed our lives for the last six weeks of school.

The “senior portfolio” was a compilation of five different papers combined in a binder turned in together. The first paper was two pages long, and then four pages, then two six-page papers, follow by the final ten page paper. This assignment really challenged my time management as well as organization skills. Before this the longest paper I had written was a four page book report. I can’t quite recall what the topics of the first four papers in the portfolio were about, but the final paper was to be about “our life story”.

“My life story” seems like a cheesy and easy paper for most people to write, especially when you’re seventeen and haven’t lived a long life, but not for me. It was hard for me; I didn’t have the story book childhood like the majority of the kids I knew. I felt like I would be an outcast compared to most of the student in my rural high school. The thing that worried me the most was I would have to read this in front of my entire class as the closure to the project. The fact that everyone would be listening is what made me almost want to lie, or leave our important parts for fear of being rejected.

I worked hard at perfecting my paper for almost two and a half weeks. I wanted to get the best grade I could, not just to pass the class, my GPA was very important to me. I needed to stay in the top 20 of my class to keep a few scholarships in line.

As I began to write I decided to tell the truth. It was hard enough for me to be the “different girl”, seeing as how I was already the only non-Caucasian in the whole school. Then for me to release all my person information in front of everyone it just terrified me, I didn’t want to be vulnerable.

If it weren’t for the girl who presented a week before me I might have still felt uncomfortable telling my story in front of the class. She revealed that her grandfather had raped her mother and impregnated her. So in reality her grandfather was her dad. This was a very hard issue for her to write about let alone reveal to 30 students. She gave me the courage to tell my story and be proud that it’s made me who I am today.

From that point on I have never been embarrassed to talk about my life or history. This writing assignment empowered me and helped my confidence more than anything else I had ever done. I’m not sure if my teacher knows how appreciative of this assignment I was and how much it affected me, I now realize it was an amazing personal growth assignment.